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ABSTRACT

This essay is in two parts. The first section contains information about teacher aides, based on experience in the United States and Canada. Aides are becoming increasingly popular in both countries. Their effect on schools is generally to allow a redistribution of teacher time, to increase teachers' job satisfaction, and to increase teacher effectiveness slightly. They also tend to stimulate cooperativeness. Training programs for aides are becoming common in the U.S., but they do not generally make formal provision for teacher associations to participate in planning. This section concludes with a brief statement of the case for including teacher aides in professional associations in some form of affiliate membership. The second section discusses the implementation of the policy, based on a theory of change processes. It concludes that although a membership policy of affiliation for aides would involve substantial opinion change and careful and committed leadership by a change agent, few practical difficulties would be likely to arise. (Author/RT)

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THE TEACHER AIDE AND THE PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATION: A POLICY FOR THE FUTURE.

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General Introduction

This essay is in two parts: the first part contains some information about teacher aides, based on experience in the United States and Canada. This section concludes with a brief statement of the case for including teacher aides in professional associations in some form of affiliate membership. The second section then discusses in some detail the implementation of the policy. It is, of course, not common procedure for the proposer of a new policy to suggest techniques of implementation. However, research data from the fields of mass communication and educational innovation suggest that it is now quite unreasonably naive to think that "facts speak for themselves". As Berelson & Steiner (1964: p. 543) put it "The communication of facts is typically ineffective in changing opinions in desired directions against the force of audience predispositions." Miles (1964: p.635) puts it more forcefully: "A kind of axiom seems visible in almost any of the studies reported in this book: educational innovations are almost never installed on their merits."

With this in mind, the proposal of a new policy representing a major new departure for large and successful organizations, without concern for the problems of implementation, seems irresponsible. Obviously, the leaders of the organizations concerned will always be sensitive to the possibilities of successful implementation. No leader can afford to ignore these. On the other hand, the techniques for implementation which are adopted can substantially affect the possibility of success. Leaders of organizations need to have some acquaintance with these possibilities in calculating the probability of acceptance of an innovation.

A. THE TEACHER AIDE

One of the most important issues currently facing teachers' associations concerns the paraprofessional worker in the schools. In its simplest form the issue is this: should aides be admitted to membership, full or affiliate, in teachers' associations?

Associations often find themselves split on the issue. Proponents of admitting aides talk about loss of control of the instructional process, jurisdictional disputes about tasks in the school, and even the possibility of schools operating, in some circumstances, without association members at all, in the event of a strike. Opponents tend to talk mainly about the perils of "diluting the membership" by admitting relatively untrained personnel.

This article will argue that a new policy is urgently needed, that the shape of the future in staff utilization in schools is becoming clear, that aides are an important part of that future, and that a policy can be developed which will satisfy most association members, and serve the overall purposes of the associations.

The article is intended to apply to teachers' associations in Canada, in general. American data is used where appropriate, but Canadian data is preferred, where available.

First it is necessary to establish a functional distinction which is vital to this proposal. The instructional aide, with whom this article is exclusively concerned, is a paraprofessional who is directly involved in the teaching or learning process. This aide works primarily with teachers, and is frequently in communication with students in contexts in which curriculum-related learning is expected to take place. Categories of personnel commonly used which will be considered instructional aides in the sense intended here are markers, laboratory technicians, and classroom assistants. (See Trump and Baynham, 1961, on instructional assistants).

The administrative aide, responsible to the principal for clerical or supervisory duties, is of little direct interest to the professional associations, since his effect on the work of teachers is limited. But the instructional aide will inevitably work directly with children, under the guidance of teachers and on similar tasks. The remainder of this article will consider the implications of this for membership policies of associations.

BACKGROUND TO THE ISSUE

Before proceeding to argue the case for a new policy, some groundwork of facts and conclusions from them is necessary. The following propositions seem supportable and relevant:

1. The number of aides in use, in the United States and Canada, is large and growing rapidly.

In the U. S., in school systems with 6,000 students or more, about three-quarters use aides, and growth along various dimensions is apparent. (See the table below, NEA, 1969).

	1967-68		1968-69	
Systems using aides	743		799	
	no. of aides	%	no. of aides	%
Kindergarden & elem.	21,477	71.7	30,179	74.9
Secondary	8,413	28.1	8,908	22.1
Unassigned	48	.2	1,208	3.0
Total	29,938	100.0	40,295	100.0

Table 1. Growth in Use of Aides in U. S.

In Canada, studies in B. C. and Alberta both suggest that rapid growth is likely. (BCTF, 1970; ATA, 1970).

2. Teachers and school districts with experience of aides overwhelmingly favour their use, and are reluctant to give them up. In New York state, 93% of 428 districts using aides considered their experience favorable. (NCTEPS, 1967).

In Indiana, teachers with experience of aides responded to a questionnaire about helpfulness of aides thus:

VERY HELPFUL 65% HELPFUL 25% NOT VERY HELPFUL 8%

The remainder had no opinion; no teachers considered the aides NOT HELPFUL AT ALL. (Snyder, 1968).

Perhaps the most convincing evidence of the degree to which teachers are now committed to aides is provided by a NEA survey, which asked teachers how they would like additional school board funds distributed. Given the options of raising salaries or providing aides, or some split between these, 40% said they would use all the money to raise teachers' salaries, 12% would use all the money to hire aides and an astonishing 48% would divide the money between aides and salaries. (NEA, 1967).

3. Aides do not represent a threat to the professional status of the teacher; on the contrary, their effect is to enhance the satisfaction of teachers with their jobs.

Evidence for the first of the two propositions here could be drawn from the general support teachers express for aides. It is unlikely that this would exist if teachers felt that aides represented a threat. It is probably significant that in one study a sampling of opinions of various groups associated with an aide project found that there was little divergence of opinion between teachers and others about the value of aides. (See table below from Emmerling and Chavis, 1967).

Participant	Strongly Favor	Favor	Support on Trial Basis	Hold Some Reservations About	Disapprove of	No Response
Teacher	83.0	12.3	3.7	1.0	-0-	-0-
Principal	83.2	14.7	0.5	1.6	-0-	-0-
Supervisor	82.6	15.2	2.2	-0-	-0-	-0-
Superintendent	64.7	27.2	8.1	-0-	-0-	-0-
College Consultant	82.0	16.0	-0-	2.0	-0-	-0-

Table 2. Attitudes in One Project to Use of Aides

The same study also provides direct and overwhelming evidence that teachers with experience of aides reject the notion that aides threaten their status; 98.4% of the teachers questioned agreed that aides were not a threat. An extensive and thorough study of the effect of aides on the role satisfaction of teachers found that inner-city teachers with aides were distinctly more satisfied with the career aspect of their role than either inner-city teachers with-

out aides, or suburban teachers. (Natzke and Bennett, 1970). A Canadian study also found that aides increased teacher job satisfaction. (Robinson, 1969). Although these studies refer to different kinds of satisfaction, (status, career, and job,) they agree in positive direction.

4. Aides have some beneficial effects on the effectiveness of instruction, although the evidence here is limited.

There is some evidence that teachers with aides work harder preparing lesson material than they did before having aides. (Bonnell et al., 1969). This may be because they have more time for important work, or it may be in part because the introduction of another adult into the classroom situation, changing the audience, affects the teacher's performance. Additionally, some interaction of the two may be involved.

Various participants in a large project estimated the effect of aides on the instructional program; there was general agreement about the benefits. (See table below from Emmerling and Chavis, 1967).

Participant	Very Much	Quite a Lot	Little	Very Little	None	No Response
Teacher	54.0	40.6	4.9	0.5	-0-	-0-
Principal	55.8	42.6	1.1	0.5	-0-	-0-
Supervisor	52.3	46.6	1.1	-0-	-0-	-0-
Superintendent	40.5	52.4	2.0	-0-	-0-	5.1
College Consultant	36.0	58.0	6.0	-0-	-0-	-0-

Table 3. Attitudes in One Project on Benefits of Use of Aides On Instruction.

Recent reviews of studies of the effects of aides on student achievement do not agree, but at least some beneficial effects seem to occur in many of the projects studied. (See Rittenhouse, 1969, and Robinson and Robinson, 1969). There is some Canadian evidence that aides, by taking over what are generally regarded as non-professional tasks, allow teachers to redeploy their time. In addition, the same study suggests that aides do assist in the individualizing of instruction. (Robinson, 1968).

5. Many new staff utilization patterns emphasise cooperativeness. Aide programs stimulate and require cooperation, and thus serve as useful preparation for more extensive innovations in staffing.

The evidence here is fragmentary but suggestive. (See table below from Emmerling and Chavis, 1967).

Participant	Very Much	Quite a Lot	Little	Very Little	None	No Response
Teacher	43.3	46.0	4.3	4.8	1.6	-0-
Principal	50.9	43.7	3.8	1.1	0.5	-0-
Supervisor	51.2	46.6	-0-	2.2	-0-	-0-
Superintendent	28.3	55.5	8.1	-0-	-0-	8.1
College Consultant	38.0	52.0	8.0	-0-	-0-	2.0

Table 4. Influence of Aides on Cooperative Planning.

A Canadian study concluded that

> the use of teams of teachers, interns, and aides promoted increased staff interaction and fostered close working relationships in the schools. (Robinson, 1968).

In addition, in reading anecdotal records of the experience of aides in classrooms, one gains a rather strong impression of initial

stress and unease in the relationship with the teachers being soon succeeded by a mutually satisfactory accommodation. A small but interesting British Columbia experiment provides a close-up view of aide-teacher relationships. Both parties confess early uneasiness; by the end of the third week the teacher comments "Feel now that I couldn't get along without her". The aide feels that she does help the teacher substantially. Although in this experiment the work of the aide was not pre-determined, later analysis suggested that about 87% of her time was spent on instructional work. (BCTF, h.d.).

6. Training programs for aides are becoming widely available; two-year colleges are particularly active in this field, and their programs tend to emphasis work-study approaches.

A survey in 1968 found that 342 post-secondary institutions in U.S. were offering training programs for aides. Of these, 203 were two-year colleges. In the programs of these institutions, 63.9% used work-study approaches. (Nerenberg et al., 1969).

At least some of these programs make use of teachers in planning. (See, for instance, Weisz, 1968). However, there are no references in the literature to the formal involvement of teachers' associations in the planning of any of the training programs, although a NCTEPS statement (1967) maintains that joint responsibility for training between schools and colleges is "of fundamental importance".

This background information can be summarized thus: in the U.S. and Canada, aides are becoming increasingly popular. Their effect on schools is generally to allow a redistribution of teacher time, to increase teachers' job satisfaction, and to increase teacher effectiveness slightly. They also tend to stimulate cooperativeness. Training programs are becoming common in the U.S.. They do not generally make formal provision for teacher associations to participate in planning.

B. A NEW POLICY

The minimal requirement for a new policy is that it serve the objectives of the organization somewhat better than the existing policy. One common way in which new policies do so is in according better with the facts of the current situation; another is in according better with new objectives.

Current membership policies of teachers' associations tend to be of long standing. They may well need review, in the light of current expectations about the work-force in schools and its deployment. The isolated and omnicapable teacher concept of staffing, currently general enough to be considered typical, will probably give way to a wide variety of staffing patterns, to the extent that there will be no typical pattern. In many of the new patterns, and also in many schools which retain the traditional pattern of staffing, aides will become indispensable members of the instructional group. Thus one argument for reviewing membership policies, with specific reference to aides, is to bring these policies into accord with the emerging concept of the instructional work-force.

Additionally, it can be argued that these policies need review in the light of changing objectives of the professional associations. At one time these organizations were primarily concerned with the economic welfare of their members. Recently they have become more concerned with professional development, and educational matters in general. The following is probably a typical assertion:

> During its first half-century the BCTF progressed from an organization motivated primarily by economic concerns to one that is prepared and willing to assume greater responsibility for educational decision-making .... (BCTF, 1970).

An appropriate membership policy should thus be more in tune with this kind of concern, rather than the economic and protective concerns of the early years.

Specifically, a new policy for aides should help members cope with the integration of aides into instructional teams, should ensure that aides are selected, trained, and socialized to be of maximum value as assistants to teachers in the instructional program, and should also ensure that aides do not threaten the status or welfare of members.

Although these requirements overlap, they can be separated out for purposes of analysis. The first, assisting with the integration of aides, is probably the most important for the members. At the general level at which associations are involved, this concerns professional ethics and practices, since disagreement on values will certainly block integration of aides.

In essence, this is a problem of socialization, of the type found in the preparation of any kind of professional, but complicated by the very limited training time available for these paraprofessionals. Studies of professionalization often consider selection and socialization as alternative techniques for providing appropriate personnel. (Etzioni, 1959). Both are currently important in professional training, (Abrahamson, 1967) although in the professionalization of teachers selection has so far played a very small role. It may be more important in the preparation of aides. Collegial socialization, after training, though frequently running counter to training in values and attitudes, is probably the most important part of teacher socialization. (Macdonald, 1969, calls

this staff-room value-system the "operational doctrine".) For aides, because of the limited training time and the subordinate position they will occupy, this collegial socialization will certainly be a vital component.

The definition, elaboration, articulation, and modification of professional values is the chief activity of what may be called the mature professional organization. Thus the main burden of collegial socialization of aides quite properly can be considered the responsibility of the teachers' associations, at least to the extent that this activity can be formalized. Obviously a good deal of this socialization will result from working with individual teachers who exemplify professional values in their behaviour; in essence the work of associations is to supplement this informal and variable socialization, with a more deliberate and planned component which only they can provide.

The second main policy requirement is that professionals, for their own benefit, and the benefit of their clients, assure themselves of a voice in the selection and training of aides. This is not currently a characteristic of aide training programs, presumably because the training institutions have not invited the participation of the professional associations.

The third requirement is to ensure that aides do not threaten the status and/or livelihood of teachers. As has already been shown, teachers with experience of working with aides overwhelmingly reject the notion that aides, as individuals, present a threat to teachers. However, aides organized into a union, with strong economic welfare goals for their members and without commitment to any form of professional ethic, might well seek to take over certain tasks within

the schools. Further, some school districts, under strong budget pressures, might well support such initiatives.

A policy which is in keeping with emerging patterns of staffing, and with association objectives, and which meets the three requirements described, is then required.

OUTLINE OF A POLICY FOR THE FUTURE

The main characteristics of a simple, comprehensive, and flexible policy on teacher aides, meeting the requirements described in the previous section, can now be presented. Note that this outline is broad enough to allow for a variety of specific policies, which meet the needs of specific associations. Questions of acceptability, ease of implementation, and preference, varying between associations, are beyond the scope of this discussion of the general needs of associations for the future.

Some version of affiliation, either through a direct membership category with specific limitations, or through membership in an affiliated organization, will best meet the requirements already stated for a new policy on membership. Appropriately designed, affiliation will accord with those future staffing patterns emphasising cooperation, and with the objectives of the associations which stress a wide concern with educational matters.

Affiliation will allow associations to carry on extensive post-training socialization activities on behalf of aides, since many in-service training programs could then include them, and they might be expected to attend staff meetings and conferences. In general, aides would gain access to some portion of the full range of professional development activities carried on by the modern teachers' association.

Unquestionably, affiliation would assure associations of a voice in training programs, since in a field virtually without credentialing affiliate membership in the professional association would take on great importance. The training institutions would be doing their graduates a great disservice if they did not ensure the acceptability of the programs to the associations.

Finally, affiliation, by drawing aides into close formal association with teachers, and stressing professional as opposed to economic welfare values, will prevent competition between aides and teachers for employment in certain capacities, (for instance, substitute teachers), which might otherwise arise. The dilution of the school staff under budget pressures can certainly be better avoided if aides are allies than if they are antagonists. The long-term goal of associations here might well be legislation parallaling California's definition of the appropriate work for aides; aides may do work that

> "in the judgment of the certified personnel to whom the instructional aide is assigned, may be performed by a person not licensed as a teacher." (Tanner and Tanner, 1969).

Thus affiliation meets the main requirements of a policy for the future already described. It has some additional advantages over other possible approaches: it avoids the "dilution of the membership" feared by some professionals, because it does leave some options open as to the closeness of the affiliation. For instance, at least initially, aides might well bargain separately from teachers, through a school district branch of their own association, which would be the link between aides and the

.Professional association. This would have the advantages of building up the aides' associations around shared economic needs. If in future more direct affiliation seemed desirable, the aides' associations and the teachers' associations could adjust their policies to allow for joint bargaining.

THE PROCESS OF CHANGE

The deliberate changing of organizational policies and practices and purposes can be brought about by a variety of people for a variety of motives. This discussion is limited to those deliberate changes sought by legally responsible members of the organization for the purposes generally of maintaining or improving organizational health. (See Clark, 1968 for a definition of health as applied to organizations). Further, the discussion is limited to changes of sufficient importance that they are thought to require more than routine line decisions. Generally in such cases some special group within the organization is formed, often with authority to consult "experts". This group will be defined here as the change agent. Within these limitations, this section will consider change processes in general, available change strategies, and change tactics, all with reference to the particular policy change which is the topic of this paper.

The process of introducing an innovation into an existing organization can be viewed by a change agent as having six stages, or elements. (Elements is preferred here because "stages" implies chronologically sequential and separate parts, and this characteristic is only occasionally true of change process in organizations.)

The elements are as follows: 1. analysis of system needs and possible changes; 2. proposal of a program of changes; 3. implementation of part or all of the program after acceptance; 4. countering of resistance to change; 5. maintaining changes by some system of incentives; 6. evaluation of degree of acceptance and the success of changes.

This view of the change process is more extensive than that commonly adopted by external consultants, or internal change agents. Generally, those responsible for an innovation are asked to complete only steps one and two here, leaving to others the vital work of implementation, maintaining, and evaluating. At least two major advantages can be claimed, at least theoretically, for the approach adopted here. First, if the change agent is aware from the outset that his (or the group's) responsibility includes all phases of the process, he is likely to be rather more concerned with the acceptability and value of the proposed change than the typical change agent at present, whose work is finished with the presentation of his recommendations for change. Second, the proposers of the changes are likely to feel a higher degree of commitment to implementing and maintaining them than the regular line officers of the organization, who are normally left with these responsibilities after the receipt of the consultant's report.

Before leaving the topic of the change process, one further point can be made about the analysis presented here. Although deriving generally from work on planned change, as already pointed out, the specific analysis of the process presented here is original. Yet it coincides rather closely with an analysis of organizational

effectiveness deriving from general systems theory (Schein, 1965). This analysis of an "adaptive-coping cycle", not discovered until after the development of the notion of the changes process already present, is presented in parallel with that.

ELEMENTS OF THE CHANGE PROCESS	STAGES OF THE ADAPTIVE-COPING CYCLE
Analysis of systems needs, possible changes.	Sensing a change in the environment.
Proposal of specific changes.	Importing the relevant information about the change into those parts of the organization which can act upon it.
Implementation of accepted changes.	Changing production or conversion processes inside the organization.
Countering of resistance to change.	Stabilizing internal changes while reducing or managing undesired by products.
Maintaining changes.	Exporting new products, services, and so on.
Evaluation of degree of acceptance and success of change.	Obtaining feedback on the success of the change...

SELECTING A STRATEGY FOR CHANGING

As Chin and Benne (1969) point out, there are a large number of possible strategies for bringing about changes in organizations. Their schema, consisting of three main types, rational-empirical, normative-reeducative, and power-coercive, seems to suffer from some confusion of means and ends, however. The first type, relying on the presentation of data to the target, and the second, relying on "changes in normative orientations" seem quite different in that the first is a means towards a further end, some change in policies or practices, while the second can itself be the end in view.

Thus for instance in the case under consideration the appropriate strategy might be rational-empirical, involving the presentation of relevant data (as was done in the first section of the paper), showing

that the proposed change was consistent with the needs of the organization and its members. However, the eventual purpose is normative-reeducative, since without some change in the norms of the organization it is extremely unlikely that the proposed change could occur. These two types can be considered indirect or direct approaches to change in the present case; it might well be necessary to use them in conjunction.

In selecting a strategy for implementing the particular change being considered here, two items of information are important. First, the target of change is an association, i.e. a more or less voluntary grouping with an essentially political basis. Second, the type of change proposed affects values which are an important part of the normative system of the group. (Exclusivity has been closely associated with the status of other associations felt to be similar.)

In effect, then, implementing the change is in some degree normative-reeducative, and involves changing opinions. Because of the size and diffuseness of the organization, it is essentially a process of modifying public opinion. The appropriate field of reference is then public opinion and mass communication studies.*

INFLUENCING OPINION

There are generally considered to be two main sources of influence on opinion, the influence of groups and the influence of leaders. The influence of groups follows three separate patterns,

* The discussion of public opinion and influence which follows draws heavily on Lane and Sears (1964).

direct communication in face to face groups, mass persuasion by a speaker at a meeting, or the more indirect influence exerted when the group publicly adopts particular policies and opinions providing thereby reference points for indiviudal members.

The first two patterns apparently rely heavily upon the intervention of "opinion leaders", identified by Katz and Lazarsfeld (1955) as critical intermediaries between advertising and consumer preferences, and also identified as being important in the development of political opinions (Berelson, et al., 1954: pp. 109-114). The third pattern, since it describes opinion change after the adoption of a policy or opinion by a group, is not relevant here.

The influence of formal leaders, as opposed to opinion leaders, is apparently an outcome of some combination of the three factors operating in the person being influenced - his own opinion on the issue, his opinion of the leader, and his judgment of the leader's position on the issue. If there is not too much strain between the first and the third, and if respect for the leader is relatively high, then the person being influenced is likely to accept the leader's opinion. However, if the leader's opinion and that of the person being influenced on an important issue sharply diverge, then respect for leader is likely to be diminished.

This brief review of research findings on opinion and influence suggests some general strategies for bringing about the necessary opinion change required in the professional association, if the policy change suggested here is to be effected.

1. Identify opinion leaders. These are likely to be people elected to offices of various kinds in the local associations. Additionally, school administrators are clearly opinion leaders.
2. Prepare a careful statement of the advantages of the new policy for circulation to these opinion leaders, emphasizing the desirability of full discussion with the various face to face groups. If possible, present the policy at a representative assembly as well, choosing an able advocate.
3. Concurrently, prepare materials for any published sources with wide circulation amongst members of the association. Various approaches, suitable for the context, should be adopted.
4. Only <u>after</u> there has been considerable effort to create a favourable climate of opinion to the new policy should the formal leaders propose it for consideration, but at this stage there should be unanimity amongst them and absolute clarity as to what is being proposed.
5. Finally, the specific organizational changes necessary for the introduction of the new policy should be proposed, in the form of formal resolutions for a subsequent general meeting.

Two further comments on this sequence of events can be made. As already suggested, the change agent (in this case, probably a committee) would be responsible for managing this implementation effort. Clearly, with such responsibilities, they would need to be unanimously convinced of the benefit for the organization of the policy being recommended. Further, they would have to be granted

substantial resources of funds and authority by the organization to be successful. For instance, their terms of reference should clearly indicate their responsibility for recommending a policy, and also managing its implementation. This calls for a substantial measure of faith by the leadership of the organization in the abilities of members of the committee, but without such faith the committee report is likely to become just another document gathering dust on the library shelf; "educational innovations are almost never installed on their merits."

The second important item for consideration is the necessity of allowing ample time for the implementation of the policy change. Unquestionably, the change being proposed here required some shift in values in the organization. It is likely to be strongly resisted by some people, on grounds which seem to them entirely valid. As Ginzberg and Reilley (1964) put it, "Time is the essential element in the process of change." A change such as the one proposed here might well require two years for implementation, or even longer.

SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS FOR A NEW POLICY

The specific changes in the existing organization needed to accommodate the membership policy change proposed here are extremely simple. If the decision was made, in principle, to incorporate instructional aides in the Federation as affiliated members, the simplest method would be to enrol them as Associate Members, under Section 3, Membership, subsection (3) Associate Membership, of the current constitution. (B.C.T.F., 1970). Additionally, a new Provincial Specialist Association would almost certainly be needed. This would require approval by the Executive, and the provision of some funds in the Annual Budget, which requires approval by the Representative Assembly.

It would certainly also be desirable for the Annual General Meeting to adopt Resolutions for the Policies and Procedures Manual (1970) clarifying the intent of the new Provincial Specialist Association, and eligibility for Associate Membership. An item such as the following might be needed:

> 19.D.16 That for purposes of Associate Membership in the Federation, only Instructional Aides will be considered. Instructional aides are those school auxiliary personnel who participate directly in teaching and learning, are generally in interaction with students and teachers, and are responsible to teachers rather than to the administration of the school. The Provincial Specialist Association for Instructional Aides is expected to form the main link between Instructional Aides and the Federation.

It would probably also be desireable to replace policy 26.A.07, on regional colleges and teacher preparation, with new statements resembling the following:

> 26.A.18 That the B.C.T.F. continue to support the position taken by the Joint Board of Teacher Education, that two-year regional

or school district colleges be not permitted to prepare students for direct entry into teaching, but be encouraged to develop diploma programs for Instructional Aides.

26.A.19 That the B.C.T.F. actively seek representation on advisory committees or boards concerned with the development of diploma programs for paraprofessionals at two-year colleges.

In total, these are not very extensive changes. Virtually all the difficulties involved in implementing the new policy would be matters of opinion and principle, rather than practical matters.

Conclusions

The future of schools, and of teachers, clearly includes instructional aides. Associations need to modify membership policies to acknowledge this, and to meet the needs of the members in regard to aides. Most importantly, this involves accepting some responsibility for the socialization of aides, and for decisions regarding their use in schools. A membership policy of affiliation best satisfies the objectives of associations, and the needs of members with regard to aides. The implementation of this policy would involve substantial opinion change, and careful and committed leadership by a change agent. However, few practical difficulties seem likely to arise.

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